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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes data from a 1998 survey of state academic officers that covered state policies related to distance education technology. Concerning general planning issues, the survey found most respondents rated "overall coordination and planning" as highly important, and that 22 states have a formal technology plan in place (Web links for plans are listed). Concerning academic policy, the survey found that 12 states have eliminated geographic service areas for programs using distance education technology; only 6 states have separate policies for approving new degree programs offered through distance education; 16 encourage institutions to use coursework offered by other institutions; 33 are involved in a "virtual university" network; and almost all states offer expanded inter-library and electronic library services. Concerning funding policy, most states do not set policy regarding tuition and fees for distance education students or mandate how revenue is shared between sending and receiving institutions; 13 states have policies regarding student technology fees; and 25 have passed legislative funding initiatives to support distance education technology. Concerning data issues, 30 states collect data on students in distance education programs, and 8 have or are developing measures or performance indicators for distance education programs. The survey and a list of respondents are appended. (DB)

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Rhonda Martin Epper

March 1999

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The State Higher Education Executive Officers is a nonprofit, nationwide association of the chief executive officers serving statewide coordinating boards and governing boards of postsecondary education. Its objectives include developing the interest of the states in supporting quality higher education; promoting the importance of state planning and coordination as the most effective means of gaining public confidence in higher education; and encouraging cooperative relationships with the federal government, colleges and universities and other institutional state-based associations. Forty-nine states and Puerto Rico are members.

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State Policies for Distance Education: A Survey of the States

Rhonda Martin Epper

In June of 1998, SHEEO asked all state academic officers to complete a survey on state policies related to distance education technology. The purpose of the survey was to identify trends and changes in state policy in light of the increasing number of degree programs that are being delivered through distance education technology. Forty-four states responded to the survey, indicating state agencies' high level of interest in sharing information about this topic.

Rhonda Epper of the SHEEO staff and Ken Sauer, academic officer for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, worked together in developing the survey and presenting the preliminary results at the 1998 State Higher Education Academic and Government Relations/Communications Officers' meeting in Providence, Rhode Island.

This document represents the final analysis and presentation of the survey data. Portions of this document are published on our website (www.sheeo.org) and include several electronic links to other sites with further information about a particular state's policies. We would like to keep the website information as up to date as possible, so please send corrections and additions to Rhonda Epper at repper@sheeo.org.

The survey was divided into four sections: (1) General Planning Issues, which covered agency priorities for distance learning, and role and mission issues; (2) Academic Policy, which covered geographic service areas, degree approval, program review, and library issues; (3) Funding Policy, which covered tuition and fees for resident versus nonresident distance learning students, student technology fees,

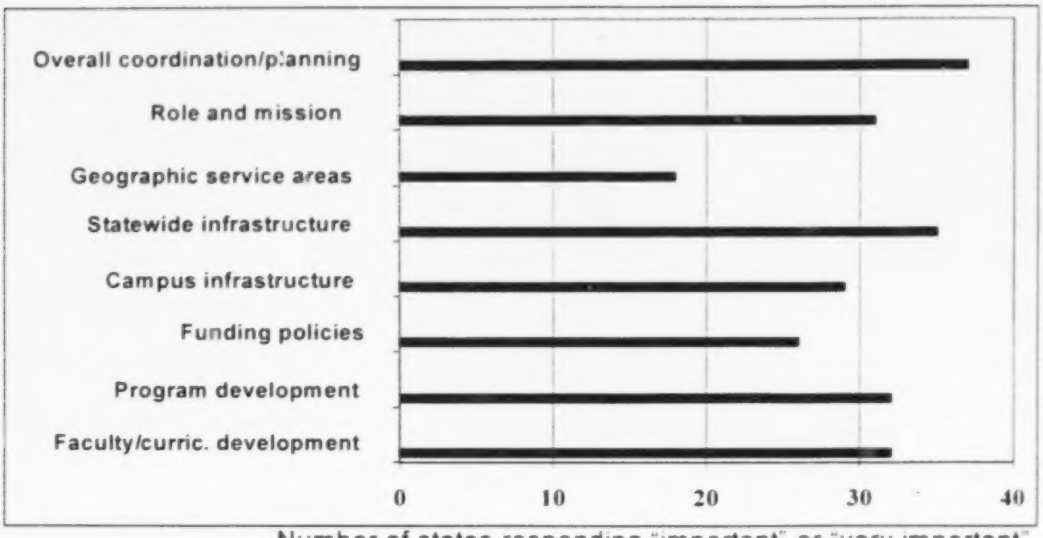
revenue sharing, and receive site funding; and (4) Data Issues, which covered statewide collection of data concerning distance learning students, courses, and delivery modes.

For clarification, "Distance Education Technology" in this survey was intended to capture only *electronic* modes of delivering instruction to students. Therefore, respondents were asked that correspondence courses, faculty driving to remote sites, etc. not be reflected in their responses.

Section I. General Planning Issues

When asked what the most important issues were in shaping their agencies' agendas for distance education technology (as reflected in current policies, studies, or plans), most respondents rated "overall coordination and planning" as a highly important issue. The surprising finding with this question was just how many other important issues there were as well. The majority of respondents rated every issue presented as either "important" or "very important," with the exception of one issue: geographic service areas. Only four out of 44 respondents said geographic service area issues were "very important," while 14 said they were "important." (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Important Issues in Shaping State Agendas for Distance Education



Technology Planning

There were a variety of responses to the question of whether states have a formal technology plan in place:

- Twenty-two states have a formal technology plan for the agency.
- Nine states have no formal plan, but other state agencies or governing boards have taken a lead role in planning for technology.
- Ten states have no formal plan, and no leadership from other agencies or governing boards.

Table 1 contains a list of states that provided information regarding their formal planning documents (either from the SHEEO agency or from other state agencies), which are used to guide the state in strategic technology planning for postsecondary education.

Table 1: State Technology Planning Documents

State	*Name and/or Web Link for Report*
Colorado	"Access to Information Technology: A Statewide Vision for Colorado"
Florida	"Florida Community College Distance Learning Consortium" www.distancelearn.org
Idaho	www.sde.state.id.us/osbe/policy
Illinois	www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/edu/vu/html/ibhe/icn.pdi
Kentucky	www.cpe.state.ky.us/issues/issues.htm
Mississippi	"Mississippi Master Plan for Educational Technology"
Missouri	"Recommendations for a Telecommunications-based Delivery System"; "From Here to Transformation: Phase II in the Implementation of Missouri's Telecommunications-based Delivery System for Higher Education;" "MoreNet FY99 Appropriations Request" "Missouri Academic Libraries and their Automated Futures" www.mocbhe.gov/acadafrs/extele2.htm
Nebraska	"Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education" Instructional technology addressed under Roles and Missions, Access, Exemplary Institutions, Partnerships, and Resources. www.nol.org/Nepostsecondaryed/complantoc.htm
Nevada	www.nevada.edu/bor.html (search for Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 9)
New Mexico	"Information Technology Plan: FY 1998-99"
North Carolina	www.ga.unc.edu/its/netstudy/
North Dakota	Technology section in NDUS Strategic Plan: 1998-2004 www.ndus.nodak.edu/general_info/strategic_plan.html
Oklahoma	www.okhighered.org/oktechno.pdf
Oregon	"Technology Plan of the Oregon University System," "OUS Technology Goals:1997-2000," "Building a Common Vision: Oregon 1999-2001 Educational Technology" www.ous.edu/dist-learn/index.htm
Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education	www.sshechan.edu/deac0497.pdf
Rhode Island	"Standards for Distance Learning," "Annual Report on Academic Technology" www.uri.edu/ribog/riohe.htm
Texas	"Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Master Plan for Distance Learning: An Evolving Technological Process" www.thecb.state.tx.us/divisions/univ/dlmp/dlmptoc.htm
Utah	www.utahsbr.edu/tech/plan.htm
Washington	"K-20 Network Governance Plan" www.wa.gov/dis/k20topc/index.htm
Wisconsin	www.uwsa.edu/olit/it-plnng/97itplan.pdf

Finally, respondents were asked whether any institutions in their states had been explicitly assigned a distance education role as part of their formal role and mission statements. Eight states reported that they have assigned a special role to particular institutions for distance education, although none excludes other institutions from offering distance education programming as well. (See Table 2.)

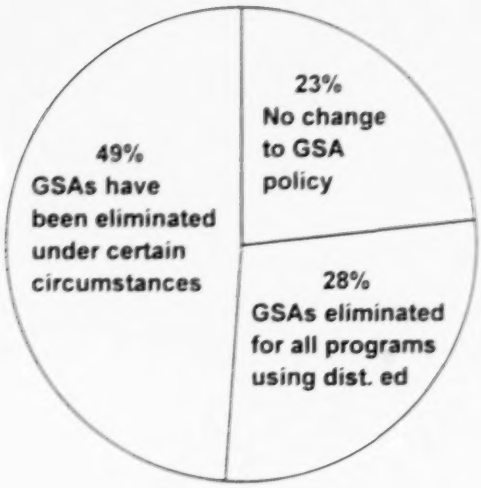
Table 2: States that have Assigned Institutions Special Distance Education Roles

State	*Institution(s) with Special Distance Education Role*
Arizona	Northern Arizona University
Connecticut	Charter Oak State College
Florida	Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida Distance Learning Network, Public Postsecondary Distance Learning Institute
Kansas	Kansas State, Fort Hays State
Maryland	University of Maryland University College
Missouri	University of Missouri - Telecommunications Resource Centers, Central Missouri State University - facilitate technological infusion; Northwest Missouri State University - course development, including modularized courses
Oregon	Eastern Oregon University has special role with regards to WGU; Oregon State University working on OSU statewide initiative; Oregon Health Sciences has role in nursing.
Virginia	No one institution has been explicitly assigned a distance education role; however, the General Assembly, with SCHEV support, has funded selected distance education projects at selected institutions. Few institutions participate in distance education as fully as Old Dominion, Virginia Community College System, and Virginia Tech.

Section II. Academic Policy

With the development of distance learning, many states have begun to address policies that appear to have outlived their relevance. For example, the following 12 states have eliminated geographic service areas for all programs using distance education technology: **California, Colorado** (except community colleges), **Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin**, and **Wyoming**. (See Figure 2.) It is interesting to note that seven of these states are members of Western Governors' University (WGU), and an additional two (California and Wisconsin) have significant statewide distance learning operations in place. Ten states have made no special changes to their service area policies in light of distance education technology: **Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, and Tennessee** (University of Tennessee only).

Figure 2: Geographic Service Area (GSA) Policies



Twenty-one states indicated that geographic service areas have been eliminated under certain circumstances. Table 3 illustrates a few examples of the types of circumstances listed.

Table 3: Examples of Circumstances Under Which Service Areas Have Been Eliminated

Alabama	An institution nearest a proposed site, if it has the interest and capability to offer the proposed instruction, has the opportunity to deliver the service first.
Nebraska	Service areas have been eliminated for courses delivered to individual homes, to places of business, to out-of-state targets, WGU, etc.
New Mexico	Four-year institutions operate within a statewide system of free-market competition. Two-year institutions have geographic service areas consistent with their local taxing districts until June 30, 2002; they then become part of the statewide system of free-market competition.
Virginia	Geographic service regions have been eliminated; however, the state (through SCHEV or the VCCS) still assumes responsibility for approving new physical sites at which staff and facilities are involved.
AZ, FL, GA, IL, KY, MS, MO, NC, TN (TBR), TX, VA, WV	Geographic service areas have been eliminated for some programs, but not where a "physical presence" or receive site is involved.

Program Approval and Review

Only six states have separate policies for approving *new* degree programs offered through distance education technology: **Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and South Carolina**. However, over half of the responding states (23) have additional processes an institution must go through to offer an *existing* course or program at a distance. Only five states -- **Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education** – require a special review process of distance education programs after initial approval is given.

Almost all (39 out of 44) states require their institutions' distance education programs to adhere to "principles of good practice," 31 of which are based on the *Principles of Good Practice for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs* developed by WICHE.

Three state policies concerning program approval for distance education programs -- Indiana, South Carolina, and Oklahoma -- are summarized below (summaries taken from SHEEO report, "Deregulation of State-level Academic Program Policies" by Rhonda Epper, January 1999).

Indiana: On March 13, 1998, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education approved the "Policy for Delivering Degree Programs Through Distance Education Technology." Part of its purpose was to make it easier for campuses to respond quickly to new opportunities for serving students through distance education, and to streamline Commission procedures for handling requests to offer degree programs through distance education technology.

One component of the new policy shortens the cycle time for approval of new programs offered through distance education. If the degree program is currently offered

on campus and a substantial number of credit hours will be delivered through distance education, then the program request will be on the Commission's agenda for action within 60 days of submitting the proposal. In addition, the new policy effectively eliminates geographic service areas for distance education programs. The policy states that "for degree programs delivered through distance education technology, the standard Commission authorization will extend to all 92 counties of the state." Furthermore, the policy indicates that "program duplication will not be a factor that the Commission will consider in authorizing degree programs delivered through distance education technology."[1] The policy instructs all campuses to provide the Commission with a description of their process for reviewing distance education programs on a regular basis. By March 15 of each year, each institution is asked to submit to the Commission a list of distance education degree programs the institution plans to develop over the next two years. The Commission will then convene the institutions to consider how they might coordinate their plans.

South Carolina: As part of its revised "Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval," the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, in September 1998, lifted much of the regulatory constraints on distance learning programs in the state. Major changes concerning distance learning programs include the following:

- Institutions may now offer any existing program or part of a program out of state or out of country without Commission review and approval if the program requires no additional appropriation from the state.
- Institutions may now offer any or all of an approved program to additional sites solely by distance education without Commission review and approval.

The institutional representatives who recommended these changes believed the new policy was necessary as a means of enabling colleges and universities to offer programming in a more rapid fashion to meet the needs of private industry and nontraditional students.[2] Interestingly, after the Commission basically "got out of the business" of regulating distance education programs, the institutions expressed concern over potential competition and duplication. Therefore, the institutions themselves have formed their own organization to coordinate distance education in the state, and have requested $600,000 from the legislature to support their efforts.

Oklahoma: In June 1998, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education revised their "Policies and Procedures Pertaining to the Electronic Delivery of Courses and Programs."[3] In the past, the State Regents were responsible for approving every distance education *course* individually from every public institution. Now the Regents only approve *programs*, defined as 50 percent or more of the courses for the major or if the program is advertised as available in electronic form. In addition, the new policy eliminated geographic service areas, and shortened the turn-around time on new program requests to about three to six weeks. Under the new policy, the State Regents approve new electronic degree programs on a provisional basis for a specified period of time pending a "best practice" evaluation. The "best practice" review will include the following activities:

- the systematic identification of qualitative processes that contribute to high performing institutions in the particular mode of delivery (using external consultants to assist as needed in this process)
- the identification of quantitative benchmarks against which progress and success can be measured

- the systematic survey of potential "best practice" sites both in the state of Oklahoma and outside the state to discover which institutions have been successful
- site visits and/or personal interviews with key personnel at the "best practice" sites
- a summary of findings and implementation plan for making the necessary improvements in processes to achieve "best practice."

The provisionally approved program must also provide information on students' background, knowledge, technology skills, retention, learning outcomes, and both student and faculty satisfaction. The role of the State Regents' staff is to assist in the design of "best practice" studies and to solicit other participants initiating similar programs. An institution will receive "continuing program approval" based upon the conduct of the "best practice" review and plans for implementing the identified "best practices," review and approval of the North Central Association, and other productivity or qualitative standards that might have been set at the time of provisional approval.

Course Sharing

Sixteen out of 44 states (36 percent) said their policies encourage institutions to use coursework offered by other institutions: **Florida** (community colleges only), **Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Utah**. Some states said their policy was generally to encourage course sharing, whether for distance education or not. Others said sharing was not explicitly encouraged through written policy, but neither was it prohibited. One respondent commented the state's policy *does* explicitly encourage course sharing, but the budget model does not provide incentives

to do so. Several respondents reported that policies to encourage collaboration and course sharing were under development or consideration.

Virtual Universities

Thirty-three states have created a statewide "virtual university" or have elected to participate in a regional or national "virtual university" (for example, Western Governors' University, Southern Regional Electronic Campus) as a mechanism for delivering degree programs via distance education technology. Of the states not participating in virtual universities, five said their states were considering such a possibility: **Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, and Rhode Island**. Six respondents reported that their states were not considering joining a regional or creating a statewide virtual university: **Connecticut, Iowa, New Hampshire, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin** (though Wisconsin has an online course catalog system in place). (See Table 4.)

Twenty-two states have created neutral "receive sites" where multiple providers may offer courses (**Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin**), and an additional eight states are considering such a possibility (**Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Washington, and Wyoming**). Examples of several states' neutral "receive sites" are contained in Table 5.

Table 4: States with Statewide or Regional Virtual Universities

State	Current Statewide or Regional Virtual University	Considering a VU	Not Considering a VU	Notes
Alaska	✓			WGU
Alabama	✓			SREC
Arizona	✓			WGU
Arkansas	✓			SREC
California	✓			California Virtual University
Colorado	✓			WGU
Connecticut			✓	
Delaware	✓			SREC
Florida	✓			Florida Virtual Campus, SREC
Georgia	✓			SREC
Hawaii	✓			WGU
Idaho	✓			WGU
Illinois		✓		Illinois Virtual Campus will begin development this year.
Indiana	✓			WGU
Iowa			✓	
Kansas		✓		MHEC "recap" proposal
Kentucky	✓			SREC, Commonwealth Virtual University
Louisiana	✓			SREC
Maryland	✓			SREC
Minnesota	✓			Virtual U Minnesota - The vision is to offer programs. Currently, VU allows registration online.
Mississippi	✓			SREC
Missouri		✓		
Montana	✓			WGU
Nebraska	✓			WGU
Nevada	✓			WGU
New Hampsh.			✓	
New Mexico	✓			WGU
No. Carolina	✓			SREC
No. Dakota	✓			WGU
Ohio			✓	
Oklahoma	✓			WGU; SREC

(continued)

Table 4 (continued)

State	Current Statewide or Regional Virtual University	Considering a VU	Not Considering a VU	Notes
Oregon	✓			WGU; Working on a plan for Oregon Electronic University. First step has been a one-stop Web page for all education (K-12, CC, pub/priv 4-yr). Next we want to work on common course schedule for DE college courses, and common marketplace of courses. No funds have yet been set aside for this effort.
Pennsylvania		✓		
Rhode Island		✓		
So. Carolina	✓			SREC
So. Dakota			✓	
Tennessee	✓			SREC
Texas	✓			WGU; Beginning participation in SREC.
Utah	✓			WGU
Virginia	✓			SREC
Washington	✓			WGU
West Virginia	✓			SREC
Wisconsin			✓	"Learning Innovations" (http://learn.wisconsin.edu) offers online course catalog, market research services.
Wyoming	✓			WGU
Total	**33**	**5**	**6**	

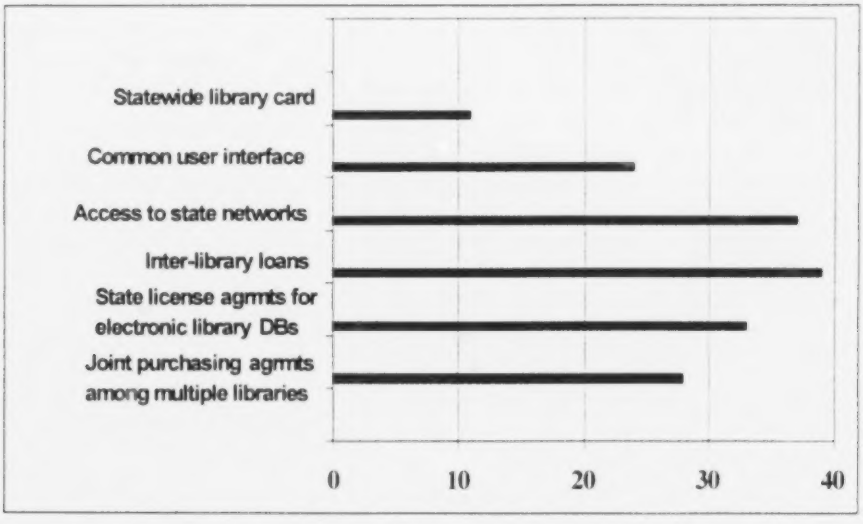
Table 5: Examples of Neutral "Receive Sites" for Distance Education

Alaska	Our rural campuses have done such for some time; will enter into a more formal agreement with WGU.
Kentucky	Existing extended-campus centers and the distance learning resources therein are "owned" by the institutions that developed them. The degree of multi-institutional use of these facilities varies, but overall there is not much sharing at present. The "owner" has first priority on use of distance learning facilities. Recent legislation calls for the establishment of five Regional Postsecondary Education Centers. They will be controlled by regional universities but guidelines for development place emphasis on multi-institutional use and the provision of services to Commonwealth Virtual University students regardless of the institutions in which they are enrolled.
New Mexico	Actively creating local learning centers at this time.
North Dakota	Existing campuses are used as neutral receive sites.
Oklahoma	Development in process; concept has been formally approved.
Oregon	Oregon Univ System University Center collaborates with community colleges.
South Carolina	State has one education center (with distance education capability) in Greenville created for traditional programs from multiple institutions.
Tennessee	The Tennessee Board of Regents has a "Renaissance Center" which may provide such a site.

Libraries

To improve the access of distance education students to library services, almost all the responding states offer inter-library loans, access to statewide networks, and statewide licensing agreements for electronic library databases. More than half the responding states utilize joint purchasing agreements among multiple libraries and offer a common user interface to all users statewide. Eleven states have implemented a statewide library card: **Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, Texas, and Washington**. Several states, including **Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, and Oregon**, mentioned major library initiatives that are underway. (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3: Number of States with the following statewide library mechanisms



Section III. Funding Policy

Seven states have policies concerning the tuition and fees paid by either resident or non-resident distance education students: **Arizona, Colorado, Kentucky, Nevada, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah**. In all but one of these seven (South Dakota), resident (in-state) *distance education* students pay the same level of tuition and fees as resident *on-campus* students. In addition, six of the seven (Colorado excluded) require that *nonresident* (out-of-state) distance education students pay higher tuition and fees than *resident* (in-state) distance education students.

The majority of states do not set policy regarding tuition and fees for distance education students. Rather, the tuition levels vary significantly by campus. When asked to describe the state as a whole with regard to tuition and fees paid by distance education students, more than half the respondents said that, in general, resident distance education students pay about the same tuition and fees as resident on-campus students (See Figure 4). Six states reported that that the resident distance education students pay higher fees: **Idaho, Indiana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, and**

South Dakota; no states reported that resident distance education students pay lower fees. On the other hand, 20 respondents said that in general, nonresident (out-of-state) distance education students pay higher tuition and fees than do resident (in-state) distance education students. (See Figure 5.)

Receive Site Funding

Eight of the responding states have a policy concerning the ways in which tuition and fees are shared between the sending and receiving institutions: **Alaska, California** (with respect to those involved in the California Virtual University Initiative), **Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota,** and **Wisconsin**. Most responding states, however, reported that revenue sharing is left to individual institutional agreements. In several states (**Florida, Maryland, and Virginia**), agreement has been reached among all community colleges that specifies how tuition and fees will be shared for distance education.

Figure 4: Tuition/fees paid by resident distance education students compared to resident on-campus students

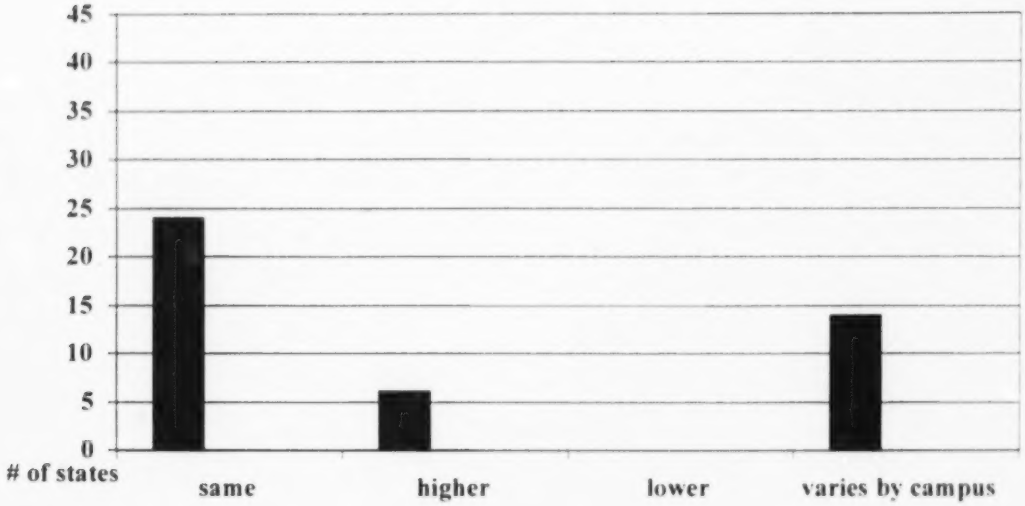
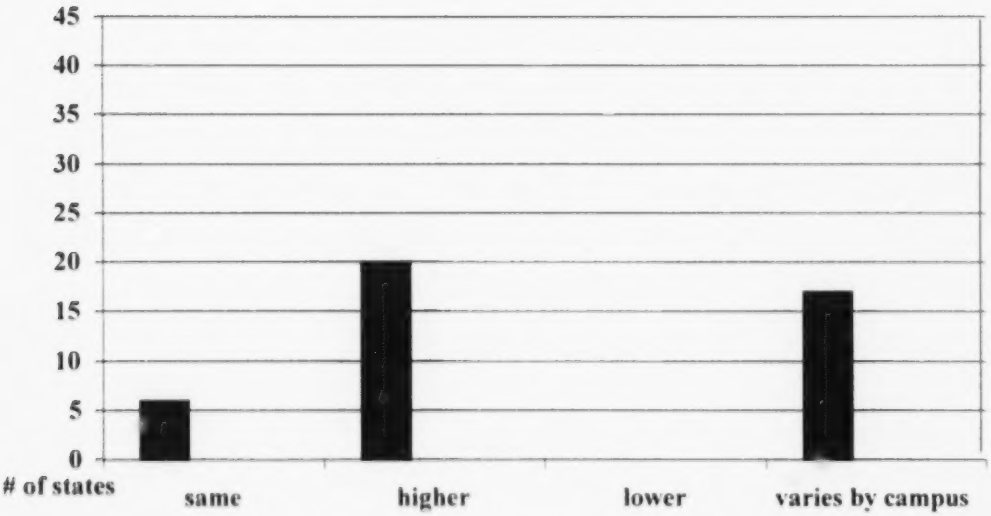


Figure 5: Tuition/fees paid by nonresident distance education students compared to resident distance education students

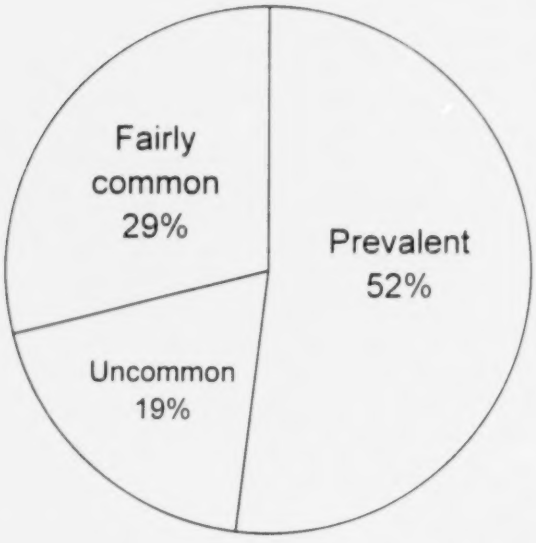


Nine states provide direct FTE support or other state funding to the "host" site or receiving institution: **California, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wisconsin**. Of the states that are not funding receive sites, 10 states are considering doing so in the future: **Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, Wyoming**.

Student Technology Fees

Thirteen states have adopted policies or guidelines regarding student technology fees: **Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin**. Regardless of whether the state has policies in place concerning technology fees, respondents were asked to indicate whether technology fees were "uncommon," "common," or "prevalent" within their respective states. Over half the responding states (22 of 42) said technology fees are "prevalent" (namely, most institutions charge them), while another 12 said such fees are "fairly common" (namely, several institutions charge them). Only eight of the responding states indicated that technology fees are "uncommon" (namely, few institutions charge them): **Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Hawaii, Maryland, and Nevada**. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6: Student technology fees among responding states are:



Legislative Initiatives

For the latest fiscal year, 25 states passed legislative funding initiatives to support distance education technology. The total amount of state support approached $340 million (some state responses covered multi-year allocations). Table 6 summarizes these initiatives.

Table 6: Legislative Funding Initiatives to Support Distance Education Technology

State	Name and Amount of Fund	
	Name	Amount
Arizona	Rural Initiative NAU UA Sierra Vista Health Services Center	$2.3 million $1.6 million $200,000 $575,000
Arkansas	Telecommunications & Technology Fund	$6 million
California	California Community College Telecommunications Technology Infrastructure Program	$28 million ($10 million augmentation) for 1998-99 FY
Connecticut	No names within agency budgets, primarily for internal infrastructure.	Total $20 million in operating & capital funds
Florida	Appropriations Act	$10.5 million $2.5 million FSU/BOU
Georgia	Connecting Teachers & Technology	$5,640,000
Idaho	Idaho Technology Incentive Grant Program	$6.7 million each year since 1994
Illinois	Higher Education Telecommunication Grants Community College Advanced Technology Grants Illinois On-Line (U of I) Library Resource Sharing Engineering Equipment Grants Base budget increases for public universities	$15 million $10.3 million $500,000 $1.5 million $2.8 million $6.7 million
Indiana	Technology Investment (formula distribution) Degree Link (specific project for Indiana State University)	$32 million (FY 1999) $1.9 million
Kentucky	Technology Trust Fund	$8 million in 98-99, approximately $9 million in 99-00. Some 99-00 funds may support a bond issue
Louisiana	Distance learning initiative	$3 million
Minnesota	Learning Network of MN and the METC (MN Ed. Telecommunications Council) MnLINK Information Network project was appropriated $12 million in 1997 for the multi-year purchase and installation of a statewide automated library system.	$5,292,000 $12 million
Missouri	Missouri Research & Education Network Common Library Platform Mission Enhancement and items to various institutions for support of missions	$10.7 million $3.4 million $3.0 million
Montana	MUS Distributed Learning & Faculty Development Program	$400,000
Nebraska	Agencies Communities	$250,000 $250,000

Table 6 (continued)

State	Name and Amount of Fund Name	Amount
Nevada	AB606	$3.5 million for 1997-99
North Carolina	Use of 1% reversion requirement - could be used by institutions for: nonrecurring costs of technology, implementation of an approved campus technology plan, or for libraries	$12,949,000
Ohio	Tech Inets Tech Challenge	$10 million $6 million
Oregon	From Legislative Emergency Board: NERO (Education & Research Electronic Networking) Two University Centers (Bend and Coos Bay)	 $1.4 million $400,000
Rhode Island	Technology Initiative	$40.6 million for five years
South Dakota	From General Fund From Tuition & Fees	$1,001,963 $490,577
Texas	Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (Bulk of Fund goes to K-12)	$150 million/year for 10 years (1995-2005)
Utah	Technology Initiative, UEN Initiative	Approximately $10 million ongoing
Wisconsin	Instructional Technology/Distance Education	$16 million for 2 years
Wyoming	Wyoming Education Technology Plan	$29 million
Total		**$339 million (excludes Texas TIF Fund)**

Finally, 10 states have established standards or benchmarks from which to build legislative appropriations requests and/or to distribute dollars in support of distance education technology or instructional technology (for example, standard cost per personal computer, ratio of students to public access computers): **Kansas, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming** (K-12 only).

Section IV. Data Issues

Survey respondents were asked whether their state collects data on students who are enrolled in and who graduate from distance education programs. Thirty states reported that they did collect such data. In addition, more than half of those 30 states said they are able to identify whether students took their instruction on campus versus off campus (in-state). Nine states reported that they could identify whether students taking distance learning courses were located outside the state: **Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana** (beginning FY 1999 or FY 2000), **Louisiana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wisconsin**. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7: Of those states that collect data, number that can identify whether students are located:

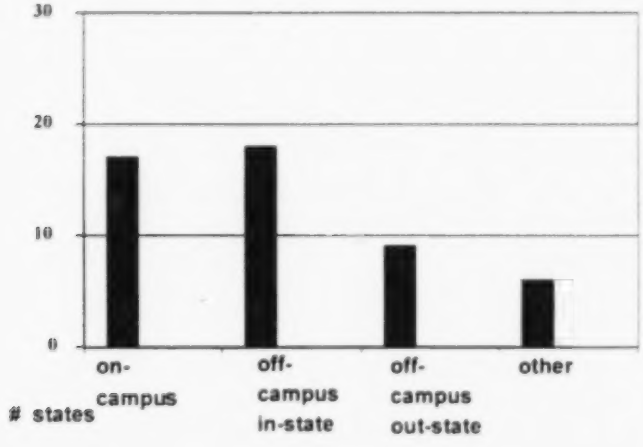


Table 7 lists states that indicated their statewide unit record systems are capable of identifying credit hours generated by mode of delivery.

Table 7: State Data Systems Capable of Identifying Credit Hours by Delivery Mode

State	Categories used to identify delivery mode
Alaska	Video tape/correspondence; broadcast; audio; internet; combinations (these can vary and are in process)
Colorado	Only category is "Alternative Delivery Site." We are not capturing Internet enrollments.
Connecticut	Can generate delivery mode from course file, but not from student file
Florida	See Data Elements 01418
Idaho	# credit courses; # non-credit courses; # K-12 courses; off-campus enrollment; on and off enrollment (total); on- and off-campus capacity; # of off-campus sites. Data gathered on telecourses; interactive video; satellite/microwave; computer based; other.
Kentucky	Open broadcast television (PBS-type); two-way compressed video; satellite; internet/web; video tape; correspondence; traditional classroom.
Louisiana	Satellite telecourses; compressed video; internet; audiographics; cable television; ITFS (microwave)
Maryland	No, but our survey will get courses by technology.
New Mexico	I = Instructional Television; M = Military Base, non-ITV;T = Military base ITV; E = Other. These are currently under discussion for revision
Oklahoma	Traditional; Telecourse; Interactive Video; Satellite/Microwave; Computer Based; Correspondence; Other
Oregon	C - correspondence; T - telecommunication, video-based; U - Internet, computer-based
South Dakota	For public universities: Campus; multiple receiver sites (MP) Type of delivery codes: TV, satellite, Picturetel, internet
Tennessee	For Board of Regents, not UT: modem, online service, e-mail, video-tape telecourse, public broadcast, audio-tape, computer-based interactive media, video disc, one-way video and audio, one-way video/two-way audio, two-way video and audio, desktop conferencing, clinical

Other states, as shown in Table 8, have more limited or developing capability to collect data by delivery mode.

Several respondents noted the challenge and questioned the usefulness of collecting data on delivery modes that are changing, converging, and increasingly intermixed with traditional classroom instruction.

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Table 8: States with More Limited or Developing Distance Education Data Capability

State	Categories used to identify delivery mode
Hawaii	Currently manual; new system will include this.
Minnesota	Fall term only.
Nebraska	Off-campus courses identified as "traditional," "computer," "video," or "high school."
Nevada	Working on this...the problem is that delivery modes are converging.
North Carolina	We are currently working on identifying credit hours generated by delivery mode.
Virginia	See the SCHEV Student Database Data Dictionary. The data structure includes a field with codes that cover delivery mode as well as other ways to categorize each course. It is an optional field and has not, to date, been used much for reports so the accuracy and extensiveness of the data are not known at this time.

Performance Measures

Table 9 shows eight states that have included or are developing distance education or technology-related measures either in report cards or performance indicator systems.

Table 9: States with Technology-Related Performance Measures

State	Description of measure
Alabama	May be included among non-mandatory "elective" performance indicators.
Arizona	Use of technology to deliver instruction. The most recent data indicate that there were 6,767 student registrations in courses that were provided via electronic delivery modes.
Hawaii	Number of receive sites; number of student registrations.
Idaho	Undergraduate, graduate, and vocational-technical credits earned at locations remote to the main campus by delivery method (traditional, telecommunications, and correspondence).
Missouri	Partnerships and advancements of regional networks, for example, BearNet, SeeNet, etc.
Oregon	Uncertain--measures are being developed at this time.
Rhode Island	Number of students per computer workstation.
Washington	In process. To be recommended in late 1998.

Of the 35 responding states that did not have distance education or technology-related measures, 13 reported that their state was considering adopting such measures

in the future: **California, Florida** (community colleges only), **Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin**.

Compelling State Issues for Distance Education Technology

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to describe the issues that are currently at the forefront of policy discussions regarding distance education in their respective states. In Table 10, the qualitative responses have been grouped into 15 categories. Each issue was mentioned by at least two states.

Table 10: Compelling State Issues for Distance Education Technology

Issue at the Forefront of Policy Discussions	Number of States	States
Determining funding priorities (capital and on-going)	11	CA, CO, MD, MT, NM, ND, OR, RI, TX, WA, WI
Establishing and funding receive sites (including revenue and cost sharing arrangements)	9	HI, KY, NC, NE, NM, OK, OR, PA, VA
Assessment of quality in distance education programs; accreditation issues	9	GA, KY, MN, MS, CA, NC, TN, VA, WI
Determining appropriate fee levels to charge distance education students (including resident versus nonresident students)	8	GA, IN, MS, PA, TN, UT, NV, TX
Planning and coordination of distance education within the state	7	AK, AR, MN, RI, SC, TX, IA
Faculty development in the use of technology; Faculty rewards and intellectual property	7	AL, AR, HI, MN, ND, RI, TN
Geographic service areas	6	AR, KY, NC, TN, TX, WY
Collaborative program development and delivery	5	AZ, MO, NE, NC, ND
Statewide infrastructure development	5	CA, IL, IN, MD, TN
Creating or participating in virtual university programs	4	AZ, AR, UT, OR
Streamlining program approval for distance education programs (deregulation and ways to encourage innovation)	4	IL, MO, SC, VA
Providing access to underserved populations	3	CO, IL, WI
Consumer protection; prevention of "diploma mills"	2	CA, VA
Development and control of statewide library catalog systems	2	MN, MO
Student services for distance education students	2	KY, TN

Other issues mentioned by individual states were financial aid regulations, accountability, accommodating enrollment demand through distance education, redressing the imbalance between the "haves" and "have nots" (both campuses and students), and the impact of system-solicited distance education programs versus campus-created programs.

Conclusion

When dealing with a topic such as distance education technology, survey data can never keep up with the rapid changes that are occurring in state higher education systems. While the data presented in this report represent the "state of state policy" during the summer of 1998, much has changed even since then. Several of the tables in this report will be maintained on the SHEEO web site (www.sheeo.org), which we will attempt to keep current. In the meantime, states will continue to examine and revise their planning, program approval, geographic, funding, and numerous other policies in response to rapidly developing distance education technologies.

Endnotes

[1] Indiana Commission for Higher Education. "Policy for Delivering Degree Programs Through Distance Education Technology," March 13, 1998.

[2] Greene, Winfred S. "Revised Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval." A memorandum from the chairman of the Committee on Academic Affairs to the Chairman and members of the Commission on Higher Education, September 3, 1998.

[3] Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. "Policies and Procedures Pertaining to the Electronic Delivery of Courses and Programs." II-3-8.2, June 1998.

Appendix A

SHEEO Survey of State Policies Related to Distance Education Technology

SHEEO Survey of State Policies Related to Distance Education Technology

Name:_____

Organization:_____

Section I. General Planning Issues

1a. In shaping your agency's agenda for distance education technology (as reflected in current policies, studies, or plans), how important are the following issues? (1=not important, 2=slightly important, 3=somewhat important, 4=important, 5=very important)

	Not Important				Very Important
Overall coordination/planning	1	2	3	4	5
Role and mission	1	2	3	4	5
Geographic service areas	1	2	3	4	5
Statewide technology infrastructure	1	2	3	4	5
Campus infrastructure (e.g., networking, computer resources)	1	2	3	4	5
Funding policies (e.g., capital funding, "receive site" financing)	1	2	3	4	5
Program development	1	2	3	4	5
Faculty/curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5
Student support services	1	2	3	4	5
Library issues	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerships/collaborations (K-12, business, private colleges)	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please describe)_____ _____	1	2	3	4	5

1b. Have any of the above issues been formalized in a "technology plan" for the agency?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, please attach a copy or provide the URL:_____

1c. If your agency has not formally addressed distance education technology, have any governing boards or other state agencies taken a lead role in technology planning?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, please name the board/agency and its initiative:

_____

_____

_____

2. As part of their formal role and mission statements, have any institutions in your state been explicitly assigned a distance education role?

- ❑ Yes (please name institution(s):_____)
- ❑ No (every institution can offer distance education)

Section II. Academic Policy

3. Typically, geographic service areas have been used to place limitations on locations where in-state institutions may operate. In light of distance education technology, please check the statement that best describes your policy. (choose one)

- ❑ No special changes have been made to our service area policies in light of distance education technology. Institutions receive authorization to offer a program that is "site specific."
- ❑ Geographic service areas have been eliminated for some programs (e.g., internet, correspondence), but not for those where a "physical presence" or receive-site is involved.
- ❑ Geographic service areas have been eliminated for all programs using distance education technology (including internet-based programs and those requiring a receive-site).
- ❑ Geographic service areas have been eliminated under the following circumstances: (please describe)_____

_____

_____

_____

4. With respect to approving new degree programs offered through distance education technology, does your state have a separate policy?

   - ❑ Yes (please attach a copy)
   - ❑ No

5. For courses/programs already approved for on-campus instruction, are there additional processes if an institution wishes to offer these approved courses/programs using distance education technology?

   - ❑ Yes
   - ❑ No

6. Does your state's policy for approving programs via distance education technology encourage institutions to use coursework offered by other institutions?

   - ❑ Yes
   - ❑ No
   - ❑ Not applicable

7. Are programs delivered through distance education technology required to go through a special program review after approval is given?

   - ❑ Yes
   - ❑ No

   If yes, after:

   - ❑ one year
   - ❑ two years
   - ❑ three or more years

8. Are programs delivered via distance education technology required to adhere to principles of good practice?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No
   ❑ In progress

   If yes, are the principles the same or close to the *Guidelines for Distance Education*, which have been adopted by the six regional accrediting bodies, and which are based on an extension of the *Principles of Good Practice for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs* developed by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No

9. Has your state created a "virtual university" and/or elected to participate in a regional or national "virtual university" as a mechanism for delivering degree programs via distance education technology?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No

   If no, is your state considering such a possibility?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No

10. Has your state created distance education centers or receive sites where multiple providers offer courses?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No

   If no, is your state considering such a possibility?

   ❑ Yes
   ❑ No

11. To improve the access of distance education students to library services, which of the following mechanisms are being used in your state? (check all that apply)

- ❑ joint purchasing agreements among multiple libraries
- ❑ statewide licensing agreements for electronic library databases
- ❑ inter-library loans
- ❑ access to statewide networks
- ❑ common user interface
- ❑ statewide library card
- ❑ other (please describe):_____

Section III. Funding Policy

12a. Which statement best describes the state as a whole with regard to tuition/fees paid by in-state or resident students enrolled in a program or course delivered by distance education technology? (choose one)

In general,

- ❑ resident distance education students pay the same fees as resident, on-campus students.
- ❑ resident distance education students pay higher fees than resident, on-campus students.
- ❑ resident distance education students pay lower fees than resident, on-campus students.
- ❑ fees vary significantly by campus and/or site.

12b. Which statement best describes the state as a whole with regard to tuition/fees paid by out-of-state or nonresident students enrolled in a program or course delivered distance education technology? (choose one)

In general,

- ❑ nonresident distance education students pay the same fees as resident distance education students.
- ❑ nonresident distance education students pay higher fees than resident distance education students.
- ❑ nonresident distance education students pay lower fees than resident distance education students.
- ❑ fees vary significantly by campus and/or site.

12c. The above statements regarding tuition/fees are a result of:

- ❑ state policy
- ❑ institutional practice
- ❑ both state policy and institutional practice

13. Does your agency or state have any policies or guidelines regarding student technology fees?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ In progress

14. Would you say that student technology fees in your state are: (choose one)

- ❑ uncommon (few institutions charge them)
- ❑ fairly common (several institutions charge them)
- ❑ prevalent (most institutions charge them)

15. Does your state have a policy concerning the ways in which *tuition/fees* are shared between sending and receiving institutions?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

16. Does your state provide any *FTE or other state funding* to the "host site " or receiving institution?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

16a. If your state is *not* currently funding receive sites (either through FTE funding or a flat fee), are you considering doing this in the future?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

17. For the latest fiscal year, were there any legislative funding initiatives passed to support distance education technology?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, please indicate which mechanism(s) is being used to distribute the funds: (check all that apply)

- ❑ competitive grants
- ❑ matching funds
- ❑ formula distribution
- ❑ earmarked for specific institutions or projects
- ❑ other (please describe):_____

Please list the name and approximate amount of the fund:
Name:_____
Amount:$_____

18. Has your state established any standards or benchmarks to build appropriations requests and/or distribute dollars in support of distance education technology and/or instructional technology (e.g., standard costs per personal computer, ratio of students to public access computers)?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

Section IV. Data Issues

19. Does your state collect data on students who are enrolled in and who graduate from distance education technology programs?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, is your data system or reporting system capable of identifying the location of students who took their instruction:

- ❑ on-campus
- ❑ at off-campus locations within your state
- ❑ at off-campus locations outside your state
- ❑ other (please describe):_____

20. Does your state have a statewide unit record data system?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, is it possible to identify credit hours generated by delivery mode (e.g., traditional classroom, internet, video cassette, two-way video, satellite, etc.)?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, please list the categories used to identify delivery mode:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Has your state included any distance education or technology-related measures in report cards or performance indicators?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If yes, please describe the measures:_____

_____

_____

If no, is your state considering adopting any technology-related performance measures or benchmarks?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

Open-end Question

22. What issues are currently at the forefront of policy discussions regarding distance education technology in your state?

Appendix B

Survey Respondents

SHEEO Survey of State Policies Related to Distance Education Technology Respondents

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